

SENATE BILL 2788
By Cohen

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 69, Chapter 3, Part 1, relative to forestry and logging operations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 69-3-120(g), is amended by deleting that subsection in its entirety and inserting instead the following language:

(g) Forestry, logging, and agricultural activity shall be subject to the provisions of this part only as follows:

(1) Any person who engages in a logging operation in any area in excess of fifty (50) acres, including, but not limited to, clear-cutting as that term is commonly understood in the logging industry, who is a non-resident of the state of Tennessee, shall submit to the department a bond in form acceptable to the department to insure the performance of the duties of such person to clean up any pollution caused by such logging operation, and for the protection of the public health, welfare, and the environment of the state. Logging operations may not begin until the bond has been approved by the department. The bond shall be in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre for each acre in which any logging operation may occur, with a minimum bond of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) and a maximum bond of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000). For purposes of this subdivision, "non-resident" means having a principal residence or principal place of business outside of the state of Tennessee. A separate bond shall be posted for each logging operation in an area in excess of 50 acres.

(2) The commissioner may petition the chancery court of a county in which all or any portion of the logging operation occurs for forfeiture of the bond if the department determines that:

(A) The continuation of the logging operation represents a threat to the health of the public or is causing or will cause pollution;

(B) All reasonable and practical efforts under the circumstances have been made to obtain corrective actions from persons responsible for the logging operation; and

(C) It does not appear that corrective actions can or will be taken within an appropriate time or it appears that the logging operation has been abandoned.

The proceeds of such forfeiture shall be paid into the court and, pursuant to the order of the court, used in combination with any remedy provided by law or equity which will correct or mitigate the pollution. If the court finds that a logging operation has been abandoned or otherwise terminated, the court may enter such orders regarding the continuance of the logging operation as it deems necessary to protect the public.

Except as provided in this subsection, nothing whatsoever in this part shall be construed as applying to any agricultural or forestry activity or the activities necessary to the conduct and operations thereof or to any lands devoted to the production of any agricultural or forestry products, unless there is a point source discharge from a discernible, confined, and discrete water conveyance.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 69-3-108(m), is amended by deleting the language "The following activities" at the beginning of the subsection and inserting instead the language "Except as provided in Section 69-3-120(g), the following activities".

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000, the public welfare requiring it.